

sown on a peat-sand mixture. It grows rapidly in strong light and warm temperatures around 80° F. The plant prefers good drainage, and I like to fill a third of the pot bottom with perlite and the rest with a mixture of perlite and peat or sphagnum. In cultivation, I can grow this plant as a perennial although in nature, it seems to grow as an annual. After growing it for a year or more, the stem becomes very long and cannot support the weight of the top growing portion any longer. One can cut the stem and re-pot the top portion which roots very easily while the bottom half will send out new shoots. Leaf cuttings will also yield new plants if placed on the surface of peat moss.

Growing B. gigantea from seed used to be very difficult until recently. It was reported in CPN III, 33 (1974) that fire was a factor which released inhibition of germination. Recently, I tried the fire method which I carried out in the following manner: I sowed the seeds on the surface of a wet mixture of sand and peat. Then I crushed up three disposable paper towel sheets and set them on top of the pot and lighted them with a match. After the flames died down, I watered the pot thoroughly and observed the hot surface steaming. About three weeks later, I observed the first seedlings growing and several more popping up each day for several months thereafter. These were transplanted into the same system as for B. liniflora. Watering should be limited and the plant grown on the moist side but never overly wet. As the plant grows larger toward maturity, it should remain almost dry between waterings. This species also enjoys a very sunny, warm location throughout most of the day. Propagation can also be performed using large root cuttings which yield small green shoots. However, these cuttings are very susceptible to black rot and so this method is not as reliable as the above.

BRIEF OBSERVATIONS ON NEPENTHES MIRABILIS

by Bill Hanna:

A nurseryman up in the Queensland state of Australia wrote to me the following notes about Nepenthes mirabilis. The area known as Cape York Peninsula is as large as Victoria, but here and there in suitable wet boggy places one comes across N. mirabilis. I have not seen it growing further south than 150 miles from Cape York, but then I have not been looking for it and perhaps it does not occur further south. It does not seem to be fussy about location, growing as it does sometimes right beside a beach or 50 miles inland. But what it appears to demand in Australia is a boggy piece of ground, in contrast to New Guinea where I have seen it growing in areas which seem to have set as hard as cement on steep mountainous slopes around Bulolo. Also, it can be found growing in the blazing sun with no shade at all, when the whole plant takes on a reddish hue and the plants remain quite short; or it may be seen on creek banks where it struggles up the broadening trees to a height of 50 feet. These, I imagine, must be very old plants. The only preference it seems to express is that it requires a very poor growing medium, if it is to produce its very variable pitchers which sometimes are as long as twelve inches.

by A. C. Woodrich:

In Palau, I found these remarkable plants growing commonly and very frequently in disturbed areas of rough path-road running from the village dock to the village abai (community center building). Also, I found plants in the low, cool rain forest and on some roadcuts and ditches near the village of Imelsub near the southwest end of Babelthau Island (largest island in Palau), Western Caroline Islands.

The local name is Melillik which has no translatable meaning, or Ollenemel a vchll (rain teapot). The "Rubaks" or wise old men who live in this village told me that the stem was used medicinally when pounded to extract juice which is added to coconut milk and drunk for an unnamed ailment. They recognized three types of N. mirabilis: red, green and white pitchers (apparently due to differing light levels). It is interesting that they did not know that insects provided food for the plant.

The smaller, younger plants were growing on road cuts, banks and ditches, while the larger plants (pitchers to about 7-8-9 inches) were growing in open grassy road margins with much grass and sedges to about 2-3 feet in height, sometimes entwining for support. They were associated with many ferns such as Gleichenia linearis, Lycopodium cernun and Lygodium scandens. Larger plants climb nearly to 6-7 feet in small shrubby trees of Melastoma malabathricum with the fruiting stalks even exceeding the height of this tree. The soil is a reddish clayish adobe type with rainfall averaging 150 inches or more a year. The plants grow in poor soils and disturbed areas and especially in savanna grasslands which are burned yearly due to negligence, children, etc.